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AGRICULTURAL REPORT,

FROM DECEMBER 20, 1808, TILL JANUARY 20, 1809.

THE weather, since last Report, having been in general either frosty or tempestuous, very little progress has been made in tillage, for the ensuing spring crops.

The early sown wheat in this Province, keeps up a promising appearance, whilst the late crops do not afford the farmer so agreeable a prospect.

Accounts from some parts of Leinster give a similar representation, and furnish fresh occasion for our recommending the practice of early sowing.

The prices of grain are rather advancing, Oats in particular has within the last four weeks experienced a considerable rise; and Oatmeal of course continues higher than has been usual at so early a period of the season.

Potatoes have also kept at a higher rate than there seemed any reason to expect, and there now remains very little ground for hoping that provisions will be as cheap as was at first expected.

The Turnip crops are consuming faster than usual, and will not bring the stock now feeding within a month, at least of the time they have generally been kept to—which will probably occasion a considerable scarcity of Beef in the markets in the months of April and May.

MONTHLY COMMERCIAL REPORT.

ANOTHER month is elapsed, and our political and commercial prospects are involved in still deeper gloom. At the close of last month we were told not to despond, for America must rescind the embargo. This dream is gone by, and we are now told, that American produce will be smuggled over to us, and that we shall have flaxseed from that country by stealth, notwithstanding the additional regulations of America to enforce still more strictly the embargo; and that we shall have also abundant supplies from the ports of the Baltic, although in common years when there were no restrictions on the northern commerce, the quantity from Russia and Holland did not amount to one-fourth of the flaxseed sown in Ireland. We seem now likely to repeat in our commerce, the fatal errors into which we have fallen in our politics. Such has been the current of events in the war-system, that at the end of every year, as favourable terms of peace could not have been procured as at the beginning, and yet the people have been buoyed up by one false hope or another. Each in its turn has proved equally delusive, yet still when one bubble burst, the next flattering scheme has met with equally ready acceptance, although the whisperings of sound policy and true wisdom, have been in the language of the poet:

“ But do not thou the tale believe,

“ They're sisters all, and all deceive.”

After the unsuccessful termination of the attempt at Armagh, to rouse those interested in the linen trade, to consider the alarming situation of this country from the probable defective supply of flaxseed for the ensuing spring, some of the minority, whose fears were not at all lessened by any reasonings which they heard from the opponents of publicly petitioning, willing to leave no measure unattempted by which the case might engage the consideration of Parliament, have published “ *Considerations*” on the subject (which we annex) and sent them to many members of both Houses; and have written to London to interest those concerned in the trade there, to engage in the further distribution of them. If this publication answer no other purpose, it may serve as a PROTEST against the proceedings at Armagh, and be a memorial of the exertions used to avert the impending danger.

Considerations on the State of the Linen-trade of Ireland, in case Flaxseed in sufficient quantities, does not arrive for sowing in the Spring of 1809, respectfully submitted to the Members of both Houses of the Imperial Parliament:

“ Owing to the embargo, little flaxseed was received from America last year, except some which left that country before the embargo was laid on.

“ Much less flaxseed was sown last year than usual; and owing to the wetness of the Summer, of what was sown, the crop was deficient, both in quantity and quality, so that there was not more than one-half or one-third of the usual quantity of flax.

"Flax is now very considerably advanced in price, in consequence of this deficiency, and by reason of the increasing demand from Great Britain, on account of the failure of the usual supply of that article from the ports of the Baltic, and must still rise higher, in case we are disappointed of an abundant supply of flaxseed for the ensuing season of sowing. The present price of flax is more than double what it was nine months ago.

"By a return to the Linen Board, there appear to be only 6,000 hogsheads of last year's importation fit for sowing, now in Ireland. The usual annual supply from Holland, Riga, &c. in case of no interruption, does not exceed 10,000 hogsheads, and the quantity usually sown in Ireland, amounts to 45,000 hogsheads. Thirty-five thousand hogsheads were usually imported from the United States of North America.

"If in consequence of the embargo, that supply be cut off from coming to Ireland, the situation of the Linen trade of this country, must, in the course of the ensuing Summer, be critical in the extreme; a stop must be put to the manufacture, and upwards of half a million of industrious inhabitants thrown out of employment.

"These alarming considerations are submitted to Members of Parliament, in the hopes of inducing them to consider of the impolicy of retaining the Orders in Council, and that measures may be taken, before it be too late for vessels to arrive in time from America, in the Spring, to induce America to rescind the embargo.

"Flaxseed received later than the beginning of May, at the very farthest, would be too late to afford relief for this year.

"The distresses consequent on such a state, and the dangers arising from so great a part of the most industrious portion of the population of Ireland being thrown idle, demand the most serious attention.

"THOS. PHELPS.

"JOHN HANCOCK.

"JAMES CHRISTY.

"WILLIAM DAWSON."

It may be further remarked, as a proof of the little expectation in America of getting off the flaxseed, that in the port of Philadelphia, from several vessels having that article on board, the shippers have re-landed it, and sold it at a very considerable loss. In other instances where it was insured, the owners have abandoned it to be sold on account of the underwriters. We find, that notwithstanding the violence of the federal prints in America, the measures of the Jefferson administration, of which the embargo is a prominent feature, are now likely to receive the sanction of the majority of American citizens, as evidenced by the probable issue of the election for the presidentship in favour of James Madison, who is known to be a promoter of the same system, that the present president has pursued.

The Linens lately purchased on speculation in Belfast, Dublin, and London, are said not to sell readily. The rise was so rapid, as to alarm the retail traders, as well as the purchasers for private consumption, and they generally hold off. The spirit of speculation, it may with propriety be termed a species of gambling, which the present fluctuating state of commerce, by diverting capital from its accustomed channels, has introduced into almost every trade and manufacture, cannot be considered as favourable to good morals, for by introducing, to so great a degree, the spirit of adventure, subjecting to great losses, and holding out the prospects of great gain, trade and traders are thrown into such a state of uncertainty, that consequences destructive to a system of sound morality may be reasonably dreaded, as well from sudden accumulations, as from the heavy losses arising from unsuccessful enterprise.

If the sudden advance on many articles of prime necessity, occasioned by our commercial war-system, affected only the successful adventurers in the present lottery of speculation, the inconvenience would not be so much to be deplored; but the unambitious trader, who is contented to hold on quietly in the even tenor of his way, the middling and poorer classes of society sensibly feel the pressure of the times in the advance of most of the necessities of life, as soap, candles, timber, and even the important article of flour. For immediately on the account of the confirmation of the embargo being continued, having arrived at Liverpool, wheat and flour advanced in price, in consequence of the prospect of supplies of those articles from America, as well as from the North of Europe, being cut off; and flour has since risen with us, by reason of the advance in the English market. Thus, in another way, we feel the effects of the embargo operating indirectly against us.

It is asserted on good authority, that the distresses of the weavers at Manchester are as

great now, as they were during the last summer. Despair seems to have entered their dwellings, as all they can spare is sold, and all they can dispense with for a season is pawned; never, it is feared, to be redeemed. Such are the trophies of war

Exchange on London has fallen in Belfast, during this month, to 5 and $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. while Discount on bank notes has risen to 3 and $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. These rates evince the decreasing quantity of guineas in circulation: but when the new banks open, and the bills falling due in Belfast become payable generally in notes, the demand for gold will probably nearly cease. It is impossible to foresee the ultimate effects which this general disuse of gold, as a circulating medium, will produce; but, in the mean time, trade will be relieved from a heavy burden, and from the inconveniences and perplexities arising from two media of different values. One fact is obvious, that the small quantity of guineas, in circulation among us for several years past, subjected us to all the inconveniences of a defective supply, and gave no security against the dangers which some apprehend from their disuse. The Acts which suspended the cash payments at the national banks of England and Ireland, settled the point for the Empire at large. We, in one corner, could not struggle with any effect against the general current.

MEDICAL REPORT.

*List of Diseases occurring in the practice of a Physician in Belfast, from
December 20, 1808, till January 20, 1809.*

| | | | |
|--------------------------------|-------|--|-------|
| Bareometer.....highest - - - - | 29 50 | Thermometer.....highest - - - - | 41 0 |
| lowest - - - - | 28 40 | lowest - - - - | 34 30 |
| mean - - - - | 29 10 | mean - - - - | 33 30 |
| <i>Synochus</i> , - - - - | 2 | Of a mixed nature between inflammatory and typhus fe- [ver, | |
| <i>Typhus mitior</i> , - - - - | 2 | Nervous, or common contagious fever. | |
| <i>gravior</i> , - - - - | 1 | Putrid fever. | |
| <i>Pneumonia</i> , - - - - | 1 | Pleurisy. | |
| <i>Ophthalmia</i> - - - - | 3 | Inflammation of the eyes. | |
| <i>Perniones</i> , - - - - | 4 | Bibes, or chilblains. | |
| <i>Arthrodynia</i> , - - - - | 3 | Chronic rheumatism. | |
| <i>Psora</i> , - - - - | 4 | Itch. | |
| <i>Herpes</i> , - - - - | 3 | Ringworm, or tetter. | |
| <i>Phthisis Pulmonalis</i> , - | 1 | Consumption of the lungs. | |
| <i>Asthma</i> , - - - - | 2 | Asthma. | |
| <i>Catarrhus</i> , - - - - | 5 | Cattarrh, or common cold. | |
| <i>Scarlatina</i> , - - - - | 1 | Scarlet fever. | |
| <i>Rubeola</i> - - - - | 1 | Measles. | |
| <i>Scrophula</i> , - - - - | 2 | Evil. | |
| <i>Dysuria Mucosa</i> , - - - | 1 | Gravel. | |
| <i>Hæmorrhoids</i> - - - - | 2 | Piles. | |
| <i>Gonorrhœa</i> , } - - - - | 5 | Venereal disease. | |
| <i>Syphilis</i> , - } | | | |
| <i>Morbi infantes</i> , - - - | 19 | Febrile and bowel complaints of Children. | |

The only medical occurrences worthy of being noticed since our last report, are as follows: 1st, a curious disease of the skin, in which the roots of the hairs were elevated so as to resemble the rough side of a grater, or what is termed *goose skin*. There was a considerable imperfection in the sense of feeling, owing, perhaps, to the diminished surface, to which objects could be applied, or perhaps, to a morbid sensibility in the parts, as there appeared to be a small pustule surrounding the root of every hair, when viewed with a convex lens. Antimony, mercury, and all the various internal remedies usually prescribed in cutaneous diseases were tried without any good effect, and it seems at present to be giving way to topical applications of a stimulating nature: the result shall be given in our next report.

2d. A child was inoculated with vaccine virus, and on the day following was attacked with fever, accompanied with sore throat, which ultimately proved to be scarlet fever. During its progress there appeared a very small vesicle in each arm, where the virus was introduced, and on the sixteenth day from its introduction,